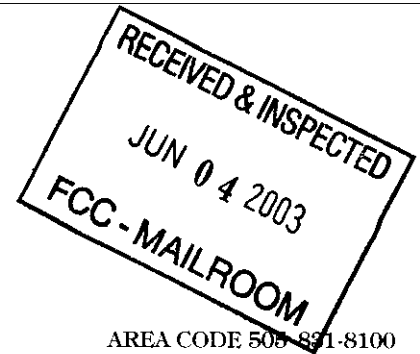


Archdiocese of Santa Fe
THE CATHOLIC CENTER
4000 SAINT JOSEPH'S PLACE, N.W.
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87120-1709



May 27, 2003,

Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street SW, Room TW-204B
Washington, DC 20554

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

RE: Informal Comments, MB Dkt. No. 02-277/MM Dkt. No. 01-235; MM Dkt. No. 01-317;
MM Dkt. No. 00-244

Dear Ms. Secretary,

The Archdiocese of Santa Fe submits the following informal comments in the above referenced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking released September 23, 2002. I have a particular interest in the matter as I am a member of the Communications Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Archdiocese has long been concerned about the erosion of local news and public affairs programming caused by the FCC's and Congress weakening of broadcast ownership limits and the FCC's elimination of broadcast rules which formerly had permitted the FCC and the community to monitor broadcasters to help ensure that broadcasters served their community of license with programs which meet community needs and interests. In particular, in this Archdiocese, locally produced and locally directed religious programming, although wanted by the community, has all but disappeared, replaced by syndicated talk shows and infomercials.

The Archdiocese urges the FCC to refrain from making changes in the current rules which (1) prohibit cross-ownership of broadcast stations and newspapers in the same community, (b) limit the number of television and radio stations a single entity may own in a single community, (c) set a national ownership cap for television station at an already overly generous 34% of households, and (d) prohibit common ownership of major television networks. Cable television already is dominated by the same companies that dominate television and satellite systems and the programming on those systems and those same companies are moving into providing Internet access. Neither cable nor the Internet (whether offered through cable or telephone companies offer meaningful alternatives to the already scarce supply of truly local news and local public affairs programs on over-the-air television and radio.

Sincerely yours in the Risen Lord,

Most Rev. Michael J. Sheehan
Archbishop of Santa Fe

cc:

Senator Pete V. Domenici
Senator Jeff Bingaman
Representative Heather Wilson